

Mr. W. G. Gifford Hunter has likewise been accredited to the governments of Guatemala and Honduras, the same as his predecessor, Mr. Gifford Hunter, in the greater republic of Central America, but Honduras is. Should this latter government decline to accept of a member, the United States will be obliged to instruct to report this fact to his government and await its further instructions. A subject of large importance to our country and the completion of the great highway of trade between the Atlantic and Pacific known as the Nicaragua canal. Its utility and value to American commerce is universally admitted. The commission appointed under date of July 21st to continue the survey and examinations authorized by the act approved March 2, 1897, in regard to "the proper route, feasibility of construction and construction of the Nicaragua canal, with a view of making complete plans for the entire work of construction of such canal, is now employed in the undertaking. In the future I shall take occasion to transmit to congress the report of this commission, making at the same time such suggestions as may then seem advisable.

MONEY MARKET.

Unable to Secure Satisfactory Results from Its Labors.

Under the provisions of the act of congress approved March 2, 1897, for the protection of an international agreement respecting bimetallicism, I appointed on the 15th day of April, 1897, Hon. Edward O. Wolcott, of Colorado; Hon. Adam S. Stevens, of Illinois; and Hon. Charles J. Paine, of Massachusetts, as special envoys to the governments of Europe, to secure the cooperation of European countries in the international settlement of the question, but up to this time have not been able to secure an agreement contemplated by their mission. The gratifying action of our great sister republic of France in joining this country in the attempt to bring about an agreement among the principal commercial nations of the world whereby a fixed and relative value between gold and silver shall be secured, furnished assurance that we were engaged in a noble and larger nations of the world in realizing the international character of the problem and in the desire of reaching some wise and practical solution of it.

The British government has published a resume of the steps taken jointly by the French and British governments, and the special envoys of the United States, with whom our ambassador at London actively cooperated in the gratifying action of subject to her majesty's government. This will be laid before congress. Our special envoys have not made their final report, and further negotiations between the representatives of this government and the governments of other countries are pending and in connection with the latter, the doubts which have been raised in certain quarters respecting the position of maintaining the stability of the parity between the metals and kindred questions may yet be solved by further negotiations.

Meanwhile it gives me satisfaction to state that the special envoys have already demonstrated their ability and fitness to deal with the subject, and it is to be earnestly hoped that the final result of an international agreement which will bring about recognition of both gold and silver as money upon such terms and with such safeguards as will secure the use of both metals upon a basis which shall work no injustice to any class of our citizens.

RECIPROCIITY.

Steps Taken to Improve Trade Relations With Other Countries.

In order to execute as early as possible the provisions of the third and fourth sections of the revenue act approved July 24, 1897, I appointed as a special commissioner plenipotentiary to undertake the requisite negotiations with foreign countries desiring to avail themselves of these provisions, the following special commissioners: Hon. Charles J. Paine, of Massachusetts, for the United States; Hon. Charles J. Paine, of Massachusetts, for the United States; Hon. Charles J. Paine, of Massachusetts, for the United States.

OUR MERCHANT MARINE.

Its Inferiority a Humiliation to National Pride.

Most desirable from every standpoint of national interest and the effort to extend our foreign commerce. To this end our merchant marine should be improved and enlarged. We should do our full share of the commerce of the world. We do not do it now. We should be the leader no longer. The inferiority of our merchant marine is a just cause of national pride. The government by every proper constitutional means should set in making our ships fast, strong, and comfortable, and the information thus furnished to the world, thus opening up new and valuable markets to the surplus products of the land and the sea.

THE SEALS.

Progress of Negotiation Looking to Their Better Protection.

The efforts which have been made during the two previous years by my predecessors to secure better protection to the fur seals in the Northern Pacific ocean and Behring sea, were renewed at an early date by this administration. The seals are pursued with earnestness. Upon my invitation the governments of Japan and Russia sent delegates to Washington and an international conference was held during the months of October and November last, wherein it was unanimously agreed that, under the existing regulations this species of useful animal was threatened with extinction and that an international agreement of all the interested nations was necessary for their adequate protection. The government of Great Britain did not appear to be represented at this conference, but subsequently sent to Washington, as delegates, the expert commissioners of Great Britain and Canada, and during the past winter the United States, Prithvi Islands, and who met in conference similar commissioners on the part of the United States. The result of this conference was an agreement on important facts connected with the condition of the seal herd, heretofore a matter of controversy, the duty of the governments concerned to adopt measures without delay for the protection and restoration of the herd. Negotiations to this end are now in progress the result of which I hope to be able to report to congress at an early day.

INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION.

The Subject Demands Due Consideration by Congress.

International arbitration cannot be omitted from the list of subjects claiming our consideration. Events have only served to strengthen the general feeling on this question expressed in the inaugural address. The best sentiment of the civilized world is moving toward the settlement of differences between nations without resorting to the horrors of war. Treaties embodying these humane principles on broad bases without in any way impairing our interests or our honor shall have my constant encouragement.

PARIS EXPOSITION.

United States Granted Ample Space for a Liberal Exhibit.

The acceptance by this government of the invitation of the republic of France to participate in the Universal exposition of 1900 at Paris was immediately followed by the appointment of a special commissioner to represent the United States in the proposed exposition, with special reference to the securing of space for an additional exhibit on behalf of the United States. The special commissioner delayed his departure for Paris long enough to ascertain the probable demand for space by American exhibitors. His inquiries developed an almost unprecedented interest in the proposed exposition, and the information thus acquired enabled him to justify an application for a much larger allotment of space for the American section than had been reserved by the exposition authorities. The result was particularly gratifying in view of the fact that the United States was one of the last countries to accept the invitation of France. The reception accorded our special commissioner was most cordial, and he was given every reasonable assurance that the United States would receive a consideration commensurate with the proper importance of the coming exposition and the great demand for space by American exhibitors.

supplies new arguments for a liberal and judicious appropriation by congress to the end that an exhibit fairly representative of the industries and resources of our country may be made in an exposition which will illustrate the world's progress during the nineteenth century. The position is intended to be the most important and comprehensive of the long series of international exhibitions, which cover the world's progress during the nineteenth century. It is desirable that the United States should make a worthy exhibit of American science, skill and their repeated achievements in every branch of industry.

OUR NAVY.

Present Condition Well Adapted to Our Needs.

The present immediate effectiveness of the navy consists of four battle ships of the first class, the second arm of the navy, ranging from armored cruisers to torpedo boats. There are under construction five battle ships of the first class, two torpedo boats and one submarine boat. No provision has yet been made for the armor of three of the five battle ships, as it has been impossible to obtain it at the price fixed by congress. It is of great importance that congress provide this armor, as until then the ships are of no fighting value. The present naval force, especially in view of its increase by the ships now under construction, while not as large as that of a few other powers is a formidable force; its vessels are the very best of each type; and with the increase that should be made from time to time in the future, it is in a high state of efficiency and repair, it is well adapted to the capacity of the Atlantic coast. The great increase of the navy which has taken place in recent years was justified by the requirements for national defense and has received public approbation. The time has now arrived, however, when this increase, to which the country is committed, should be taken to provide three or four more battle ships of the first class, at least one on the Pacific coast and a floating dock on the gulf. This is the subject of the report of the special board, appointed to investigate the subject. There should also be ample provision made for powder and projectiles, and other munitions of war for an increased number of officers and enlisted men. Some additions are also necessary to our navy yards for the repair of the increased number of vessels. As there are now on the stocks five battleships of the largest class, which can not be completed in less than two years, I concur with the recommendation of the secretary of the navy for an appropriation authorizing the construction of one battleship for the Pacific coast, where at present there is only one in commission and one under construction, while on the Atlantic coast there are three in commission and four under construction; and also that several torpedo boats be authorized in connection with our general system of coast defense.

ALASKA.

Material Changes in Territorial Laws Are Necessary.

The territory of Alaska requires the prompt and early attention of congress. The conditions now existing demand material changes in the laws relating to the territory. The great influx of population during the past summer and fall to the territory of a still larger immigration in the spring will not permit us to longer neglect the extension of civil authority to the territory or the prompt establishment of a more thorough government. A general system of public surveys has been extended to Alaska, and the territory is being surveyed. The survey has thus far made it that district are upon special surveys. The act of congress extending to Alaska the mining laws of the United States contained the reservation that it should not be construed to put in force the general laws of the country. The act approved March 2, 1897, was given for entry of lands for town site purposes and also for the purchase of not exceeding 640 acres of land for the purpose of purposes of trade and manufacture. The purpose of congress as thus far expressed has been that only such rights should apply to that territory as should be specifically named.

As it is to the interest of the government to encourage the settlement of the country and its duty to follow up its citizens with the benefit of legal machinery, I earnestly urge that congress take prompt action to extend the system of government with such flexibility as will enable it to adjust itself to the future areas of greatest population.

THE YELLOW FEVER.

Glaring Defects in Quarantine Laws Should Be Removed.

The recent prevalence of yellow fever in a number of cities and towns throughout the south has resulted in much disturbance of commerce and commerce and has caused much loss of life and property. The quarantine laws as will make the regulations of the national quarantine authorities more effective. The report of the secretary of the interior, in the portion of his report relating to the operation of the marine hospital service, contains many valuable suggestions for the improvement of the quarantine laws and recommends amendments thereto which will give the treasury department the requisite authority to prevent the invasion of the United States by yellow fever. The report of the secretary of the interior, in the portion of his report relating to the operation of the marine hospital service, contains many valuable suggestions for the improvement of the quarantine laws and recommends amendments thereto which will give the treasury department the requisite authority to prevent the invasion of the United States by yellow fever.

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AN INDIAN ASSASSINATION.

The secretary of the interior reports that leading Indians have absorbed great tracts of land to the exclusion of the common people and government by an Indian agent. The result has been practically established to the detriment of the people. It has been found impossible for the United States to keep its citizens out of the territory and

the exorbitant conditions contained in treaties with these nations have for the most part become impossible of execution. It has been possible for the tribal governments to secure to each individual Indian his full enjoyment in common with the white citizens of the common property of the nation. Friends of the Indians have long believed that the best interests of the civilized tribes would be promoted by being found in American citizenship, with all the rights and privileges which belong to that condition.

THE DAWES COMMISSION.

By section 16 of the act of March 3, 1883, the president was authorized to appoint three commissioners to enter into negotiations with the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Muskogee (or Creek) and Seminole nations, commonly known as the Five Civilized Tribes in the Indian territory, to be: The extinguishment of tribal titles to any lands within that territory held by any and all such nations or tribes, either by cession of the same or part thereof to the United States or by allotment of the same to the individual members of the tribes of such nations or tribes respectively as may be entitled to the same, or by such other method as may be deemed proper by the several nations and tribes aforesaid, or each of them with the United States, with a view to such an adjustment upon the basis of justice and equity as may, with the consent of the said nations of Indians, be deemed proper by the United States, to enable the ultimate creation of a state or states of the union, which shall embrace the lands within said Indian territory.

The commission met much opposition from the beginning, and those in control manifested a decided disinclination to meet with favor the propositions submitted. It took more than three years after this organization the commission effected an agreement with the Choctaw nation alone. The Choctaws, however, refused to accede to its terms, and as they have a common interest with the Chickasaws in the lands of said nation, the Choctaws and Chickasaws could have no effect without the consent of the former. On April 22, 1887, the tribes—the Choctaws and Chickasaws. This agreement, it is understood, has been ratified by the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations, and only requires ratification by congress to make it a part of the law. Negotiations are yet to be had with the Cherokee, the most populous of the Five Civilized tribes, and the smallest in point of numbers and territory.

The provision in the Indian appropriation act, approved June 10, 1887, that the duty of the commission to investigate and determine the rights of applicants for citizenship in the civilized tribes, the commission is at present engaged in this work among the tribes and has made arrangements for taking the census of these people up to and including the present month. Should the agreement between the Choctaws and Chickasaws be ratified by congress, the Choctaws and Chickasaws will be authorized to make an agreement with the commission, then it will be necessary that some legislation shall be had by congress, which, while just and honorable to the Indians, shall be equitable to the white people who have settled upon these lands by invitation of the United States. Hon. W. L. Dawes, chairman of the commission, under date of October 1, 1887, "Individual ownership is in their (the commission's) opinion absolutely essential to the progress of the tribes. The present conditions, and the lack of it is the root of nearly all the evils which so grievously afflict these people. A method of agriculture, a method of industry, unless the United States courts are clothed with the authority to apportion the lands to the individual Indians, for whose use it was originally granted."

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erment becoming the possible owner railroad property which it performs must conduct and operate. I feel constrained to lay before congress those facts for its consideration and action before the consummation of the sale, it is clear to my mind that the government should not permit the property to be sold at a price which would yield less than one-fifth of its entire debt, principal and interest. Even if the government, rather than accept less than its claim, should become a bidder, and thereby the owner of the property, I submit to the congress for action.

CONGRESSIONAL LIBRARY.

Congratulates the Nation on Its Treasure-House of Knowledge.

The library building provided for by the act of congress approved April 15, 1886, has been completed and opened to the public. It should be a matter of congratulation that through the foresight and munificence of congress the nation possesses this noble treasure house of knowledge. It is a building of the highest order of architecture, and the work done so far toward the cause of education, congress will continue to develop the library in every phase of its work. It is a building of the highest order of architecture, and the work done so far toward the cause of education, congress will continue to develop the library in every phase of its work. It is a building of the highest order of architecture, and the work done so far toward the cause of education, congress will continue to develop the library in every phase of its work.

CIVIL SERVICE.

Distinct Advance Made in Operation of the Law.

The important branch of our government known as the civil service, the practical improvement of which has long been a subject of earnest discussion, has of late years received increased legislative and executive approval. During the past few months the service has been placed upon a still firmer basis of business methods and personal merit. While the right of our veterans soldiers to reinstatement in the service has been asserted, dismissals for merely political reasons have been with care guarded against, and the examinations for admittance to the service enlarged and at the same time rendered less technical and more practical, and a distinct advance has been made by giving a hearing before dismissal upon all cases where incompetency is charged or demand made for the removal of officials in any of the departments. This order has been made to give to the accused his right to be heard, and in no way impairing the power of removal, which should always be exercised in cases of inefficiency and incompetency, and which is one of the vital safeguards of the civil service reform system, preventing stagnation and deadwood and keeping every employee keenly alive to the necessity of his own improvement depends not on favor, but on his own tested and carefully watched record of service.

GOVERNMENT EXPENSES.

Appropriations Must Be Kept Within the Receipts.

I am forced by the length of this message to omit many important references to the various departments of the government which will have to deal at the present session. They are fully discussed in the departmental reports of all the departments. The estimates of the expenses of the government by the several departments will, I am sure, be carefully scrutinized. While the congress may not find it an easy task to reduce the expenses of the government, it should encourage their decrease. The expenses will, in my judgment, admit of a decrease in many branches of the government without injury to the public interest. It is the duty of the government to keep the appropriations within the receipts of the government and thus avoid a deficit.

Executive Mansion, December 6, 1897.

AMATEUR CONJURING.

How to Be a Herrmann With a Little Practice.

If all that a professor of magic says is true, anybody with a little practice may become a rival to the great Herrmann. All one needs are a few implements sold by the professor, a few lessons at \$1 a lesson, and practice—the last costs you nothing but time.

Here's one of the tricks that he calls easy. It's to make a coin pass through a wand, through a pack of cards and drop into a glass on which the cards are resting. The professor placed his glass on the table, rested the cards over the glass and stood his wand perpendicular on the cards. "Here's the coin," he said, holding it in his left hand and appearing to take it in his right. "Now, watch it go." He hit the top of his wand a crack with his right hand, and instantly there was a jingling, and a coin dropped out of the pack of cards and in the glass. But it wasn't the coin the professor exhibited at first. That he still held in his left hand. The one that dropped into the glass had rested securely in a couple of slits in the bottom card until the downward pressure from the wand bent the cards and released the coin. A little dexterity in handling the cards makes it impossible to discover the coin in the pack, and a few words about the wand and magic, and so on, add much to the bewilderment and the interest.

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